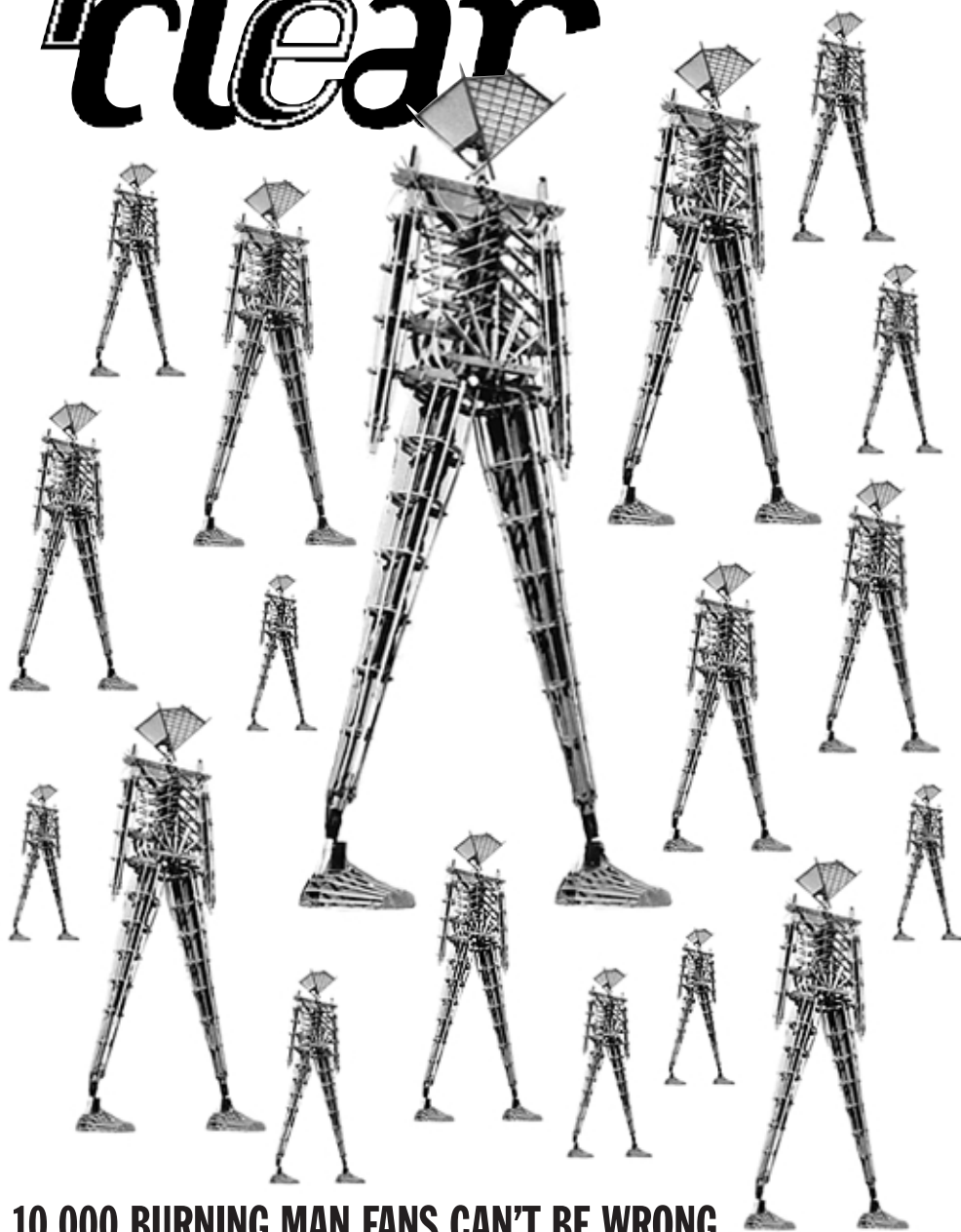


pliss clear

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10,000 BURNING MAN FANS CAN'T BE WRONG

Or can they? Ex-Black Rock Gazette editor Stewart McKenzie rants. See page 4.

Black Rock City's other daily reader

**piss
clear**

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1 september 1996
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cover image:
Burning Man has
left the building.
Photography by
Adrian Roberts.

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Adrian Roberts

Urban blight comes to Black Rock

by ADRIAN ROBERTS

To be honest, I'm actually somewhat surprised that my friends and I are even **out** here this year. While last year had its **moments**, it was definitely **tarnished** by several negative incidents. For instance, it was quite disturbing to wake up Sunday morning to discover an **unshod** vagrant, reeking of alcohol, crashed in our spare storage tent, shamelessly helping himself to our food and water. When I ever-so-politely confronted him, saying, "Hey there, you know, it's usually customary to ask permission first before you start eating someone else's food," he replied drunkenly, "Oh, yeah, uh, well...can I eat some of your food?" This is **exactly** the sort of unsavory element that had us questioning whether or not we would return.

Another **incident** occurred on Sunday night. Having set up our camp out in the "suburbs," we constructed an eight-foot tall metal tree, and adorned it with several blinking lights and flashing beacons, to assist us in finding our way home easily. For the first three nights, it worked like a **charm**, easily defining from a distance where our campsite was. So it was with great **frustration** when we found ourselves wandering around the playa late Sunday night, **desperately** trying to find our campsite. After a good two hours of searching, we finally **stumbled** across our tents. The reason we couldn't find our camp? Our tree beacon had been horribly **vandalized**—all of the lights attached to it had been stolen—about \$75 worth actually. This steamed us to no end. That was when we realized that things at Burning Man had definitely **changed**.

Granted, anytime you get thousands of people together for **any-thing**, you're bound to get a few assholes. Still, what was once a beautiful experiment in **utopian** community living seems to have **degenerated** into transplanted **urban blight**. It's unfortunate that we now have to be **"streetwise"** out in the desert. Needless to say, we keep our car doors locked.

Speaking of cars, the biggest assholes on the playa this year are the ones who can't seem to stop driving everywhere! This isn't fucking L.A., y'know! Why can't you people just come out here and **park**! As everyone knows, driving around the playa creates huge dust plumes—causing, in effect, **pollution** in the desert.

At night, the level of **vehicular assholeishness** gets even **worse**. We've nearly gotten plowed several times by idiots **speed-ing** their way out to rave camp—fucked up on drugs no doubt—thinking that out in the wide expanse of the desert, they don't need to worry about hitting anything. Except for maybe **pedestrians**.

Look, if you're going out to the Techno Ghetto, walk, or at least ride a bike. If you **must** drive, please do so **slowly**. The way things are going, it's only a matter of time before someone gets **hit**. Think about how **large** this desert is, and then think about how **ridiculous** that sounds. Get a clue.



adrian's rant

Heather Shirkey

McSatan's Beastro

by PF

Once when I was hitchhiking, a driver who was kind enough to pick me up offered me his extra burger, because he was already full after **eating** one. So I ate the burger—what else could I do? And let me tell you, it was the most **disgusting** burger I ever had. And I'm not exaggerating, **either**.

Well, that was years ago, but by some nasty coincidence of **fate**, when I ordered my sandwich from McSatan's **Beastro** yesterday, I noticed that the gentleman serving me this fine **culinary** creation struck an uncanny resemblance to that very same truck driver, and it brought me right back to that moment in time, the gristle in my mouth and everything.

But boy, was I in for a **surprise**. My mind was saying, "Don't eat that shit, man, don't you remember what happened **last time**?" But being a sucker for meat—or a sucker of meat, to be exact—I bit anyway, and it was really quite **delicious**. In fact I never would have expected such a good burger here at Black Rock, even if the burger-flipper at Mickey S's hadn't reminded me of that trucker.



Heather Shirkey

food

Hot outfits

by ADRIAN ROBERTS

The Burning Man festival gives many participants the opportunity to **look** and dress in a manner they may not otherwise have the freedom to do in their normal, every-day lives. Put bluntly, apparel out here in Black Rock City can get damn near fetishistic. Unfortunately, most **sexy fetishwear** doesn't really work out here—at least not during the **day**—due to the sort of **materials** often used in their construction. Here's why:

leather: looks good, but it's a little too hot to wear in the desert.
black vinyl PVC: looks good, but it's a little too hot to wear in the desert.
latex and rubber: looks good, but it's a little too hot to wear in the desert.
clear plastic: looks good, but it's a little too hot to wear in the desert.

Save items made out of the above material for wear at **night**. Unless that is, you're trying to sweat away a few extra pounds and risk dehydration. Otherwise, feel free.

Jorge's latex and chain dress is too hot.

survival



Adrian Roberts

Required viewing for the Black Rock Desert

by LIZARD MAN

The Road Warrior
Priscilla, Queen of the Desert
Tank Girl
Heavy Metal

All four of these movies feature expansive, **surreal** landscapes as a catalyst for the action that takes place. The bleak, post-apocalyptic desert of *The Road Warrior* contrasts with the **flippant** approach to a similar post-apocalyptic scenario in *Tank Girl*.

Priscilla, Queen of the Desert is a definite requirement for anyone grappling with the evolution of Black Rock Fashion. Answers and **inspirations** abound as a troupe of drag queens make their way across the Australian Outback. The acting is par excellence, by the way. Finally, *Heavy Metal*, perhaps the most ambitious animated undertaking since Ralph Bakshi ran out of money to complete *Lord of the Rings*, takes the viewer through a number of **otherworldly** landscapes, populated with creatures from your dreams and **nightmares**.

media exposure

Tank Girl
and friend



Party pooper

by STEWART McKENZIE

It's a party in the desert, an appreciation of survival in a harsh climate, a rockin' good time building false **gods** with fifty of your best friends—all but two who are, of course, tripping their brains out on ecstasy 'n' bourbon.

Yes, it's Burning Man—the most exciting and coolest festival ever conceived, the greatest **wonder** since sliced bread, the hyped machine of Alternative Nation.

And I do believe the **hype**. After all, I've been an avid participant and propagandist of Burning Man for the past three years. But this year, things are **different**. This year, I'm not **there**.

Due to events beyond my control, I have found myself just too **frazzled** and bedazzled at the moment to partake in the festivities. I can **barely** keep up with the social constructs I've built here in square America, let alone the ones I'd be building in **hip** Nevada. I needed a break—physically, emotionally and psychologically—from this whole Burning Man **gig**.

Why you might ask? Ask yourself about the past few weeks. Did you **start** panicking, wondering where you left the tent poles and kerosene, the Igloos and bottle rockets from last year? Did you **worry** when you realized a week ago that there were only two digits to the left of the decimal point when you checked your ATM balance? Did your brain begin to **hemorrhage** at the thought of your rusted-out Vega traversing the playa floor? Won't you feel like an **idiot** driving back into the Bay Area tomorrow, stuck in traffic for hours and still coming down from that last hit of acid—only to go to work the next morning completely **burnt-out**, trying to blow playa dust out of your nose?

Nope, not me, not this year. I simply sat back and did **nothing**—while everyone around me went into **conniptions** preparing for Burning Man '96.

Take Kevin for example. He was planning this **elaborate** "train" to and from Burning Man, in some gi-mongous RV or truck or something. Bands would rock and beer would flow—that is, until the **plan** fell apart, after it became apparent that it would be too **cost-prohibitive**.

Or take Bryan. Last year, he hauled to the playa a complex set of equipment for a raised

Former *Black Rock Gazette* editor
Stewart McKenzie
is burnt-out.



Heather Shirkey

musings

time-lapse camera, which turned out to be such an enormous **pain-in-the-ass** he vowed never to do it again. Last I heard, he and the camera were making a return appearance.

And what about Stacey or Eileen or Bill or Adrian, along with the **ten thousand** other souls, who have spent the past few weeks—months, even—planning, **plotting**, dreaming. Everyone **has** to be at Burning Man. Everyone knows that right now, in Black Rock City, there are more shaved heads and pierced nipples **per capita** than anywhere else in the United States. Everyone knows that right now, out on the playa, there are more naked bodies, funky vehicles, **art** installations, and pyrotechnic performances than any Lollapaloozer or Rainbow Grunting could ever hope to produce. It's our annual convention—a convention of **freakdom**. It's a live gathering in a live setting, away from all of our telephones and computers and shopping centers and billboards featuring chemically-dependent **models**.

Now before you start thinking that I'm just a jaded, cynical bastard, let me tell you this: I love Burning Man. It really is a hoot, and it's definitely worth the energy people put into it. What gets me **down** is this: when it's all finished—when the last tent pole is pulled from the ground, when the last porta-potty is put on the flatbed, when the last cigarette is picked gingerly off the playa floor—it's just...empty.

In the meantime, we've all returned to "civilization"—back to those miles of shoddy construction we call our homes and workplaces, those environments we robotically return to...

With all the energy we invest into making Burning Man happen—where we **create** a world on our own terms—it's always a shame to **return** to the world we left, a world set up by people we've never met and have never known of our existence.

Put **that** in your pipe and smoke it.

Fashion is burning

by SISTER KITTY CATALYST

While I hardly profess being a fashion **guru**, my styling voodoo may work for you too. Besides, if you're reading this, you probably need all the help you can get.

So here you are, in the dusty, **blight**, and bitter Black Rock Desert—filled with drab and **neutral** colors such as beige and tan. Why not add some sparkle and **pizzazz** to this rather somber palette? By all means, wear bright colors! You need to retain some white highlights however, to spark the contrast of colors in your ensemble.

Flowing, fluffy fabrics are highly recommended. Really, any fabric that's light and airy should work. Layer them a la sheik—no, not the condom—for maximum effect. Consider ripping scraps into strips for additional **accenting**. If nothing else, at least wrap a towel around your head, allowing you to dry it—and build a turban—at the same time. Resourcefulness is the **key** here!

Wearing a **toga** or covering oneself with **mud** have both become so popular on the playa, they're practically cliché. Let's face it—they've been done to death. Still, if you must resort to one of these tired-but-true fashion trends, definitely add your own little **twists** to set yourself apart.

With mud, try patterns or **stripes**. Hell, pile it on and make your own shoulder pads or breast implants. And don't forget to accentuate the lower legs, as you'll want spectators to get the full-length treatment. Mix in some beet juice or any other **colorfast** food to make colorful, wearable, facial masks. Or draw in designs or **patterns** with a burnt wine cork, which makes black accents on and around dried mud easy and **workable**.

The key to wearing a toga with style is all in the **accessories**. Try a colorful **sash** and pearl-drop earrings. If you forgot to pack laurel leaves, then improvise! Try charcoal or burned wood—stunning and convenient. A big **necklace** is always a plus. Find anything and put it on a string. Or carry around a scepter or torch, both of which work well for accessorizing an **outfit**.

Embarrassed by that boring **parasol** or umbrella? Find some spray paint or get some watered-down mud. Make some patterns or do **splotching**. I'm known for hanging wine corks a la dingo-style from mine—my parasol that is—and touching it up with doo-dads or strips of fabric. There's plenty of room out here, so fill it up a bit—if you're serving as a sun shield, you're **bound** to make friends quickly.

Tin foil, wax paper, napkins, garbage, plastic, used car parts—all of these can be used as **accents** for your outfit. Everything is fair game in the wild range. Choose or lose—it's your choice, but accessorizing is the key. If all else fails, find a partner or two, and dress alike. Even if you do a less than favorable job, you'll still **pass**, as people will simply think that they've missed the point. Above all though, have fun—and be sure to **look good** doing it! Good luck and Goddess bless.

Sister Kitty's style tips work!



Marc Geiler

E.O.M.'s top ten desert albums

African Head Charge
Songs Of Praise

Chrome
3rd From The Sun
Peter Gabriel
Passion

B.C. Gilbert G. Lewis
Cupol / 8Time
My Bloody Valentine
Loveless

Rapoon
Errant Angels
Terminal Cheesecake
King Of All Spaceheads

Throbbing Gristle
Heathen Earth

Wire
154

Zoviet France
Just An Illusion

— Dick Chowder,
E.O.M. / Radio E.O.M.

Bands we'd like to see at Burning Man

The Beatles
Blue Period
Crash Worship
Devo
Eat Static
Extra Fancy
Five Feet To The Window

The Geraldine Fibbers
The London Philharmonic
Man or Astroman?
Marilyn Manson
Miranda Sex Garden
Mr. Bungle
The Orb
Ozric Tentacles
The Qube Chix
Scar Tissue
Stomp
Trance Mission
John Zorn

— list compiled by
Adrian Roberts, PF,
Heather Shirkey, and
Matt Ferranto

Mermen to frolic on ancient seabed

by LIZARD MAN

Tragically miscast as mere surf music, the Mermen vacillate between high-speed fret workouts and drawn-out melodic improvisations that soar and dive and leave you hanging, wondering, "Just how many layers of feedback can be compressed into a single note anyway?" Then, before you know it, it clarifies and resolves, blending effortlessly into a stream, a waterfall, a rippling cascade of psychedelic textures.

band review

Catchy guitar improves litter the soundscape with jagged and crunchy chunks of carefully-articulated distortion, blending with a strong rhythm base that doesn't need to be told where to go next—they just feel it. The absence of vocals frees the band to explore wherever they feel drawn, and with song titles like "With No Definite Future and No Purpose Other Than To Prevail Somehow....," that could be just about anywhere.

Still, these guys are professionals, and years of tireless and thankless gigging have honed them into a tightly-wound precision mechanism. They don't get lost on their wanderings, so when you suddenly realize that you recognize that riff from earlier in the tune, you aren't even surprised—you just wonder how long it's been there and, by the way, where were you?

It's hard to believe that just three guys can make such a lush, rich sound. Bass, drums, guitar—that's it. There must be a sub-ether sounding board in there somewhere. Slow it down to a deep-sea pace, then bring it back around to surface in the Black Rock Desert.



The Mermen perform this afternoon during the formal cocktail party.

What other band would load up all their equipment and drive out into the middle of the playa, away from camp, just to jam with each other, the earth, and the sky? That's what they did last year, coming back to camp afterwards to play for the rest of us. And for those wondering how that gig turned out, just remember the storm. Yes, the big one.

No more BM

by ADRIAN ROBERTS

I'm not so sure that I like this new short-hand way of referring to Burning Man by its acronym, BM. You see, when I was a just a wee little toddler, my mother didn't like us referring to our shit as "poopies," or "stinkies," or any of the myriad other cutesy names that parents get their children to call feces. My mother told me to call it "BM," which stood for bowel movement. Please, don't let Burning Man turn to shit! Use its full name. Do it for me. Thank you.

daily haiku

by ADRIAN ROBERTS

Dreaming Burning Man
The playa is on my mind
Get to Black Rock soon

Some here are naked
Lots of people are on drugs
Summer camp for freaks!

The Black Rock Gazette
What's up with that tired rag?
It's a waste of trees

Central Camp is cool
Theme camps are interesting
It's too loud at night

Techno Ghetto rules!
Six sound systems blasting beats
It's a long walk though

Producing Piss Clear
Is a big pain-in-the-ass
Gratifying though

Please don't steal my bike
It's the only one I have
I need it out here

My mouth is gritty
There's playa dust in my teeth
Where's my damn toothbrush?

Burn it down quickly
We're tired let's just go home
Last night was more fun

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To Carl and Joey:
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From Trip and Dutch.

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cute, fun, and clean. Androgyny, gender-bending, and an interest in S/M are all pluses. Non-smokers only please. Let's play! If you're interested, then e-mail: Melchior13@aol.com

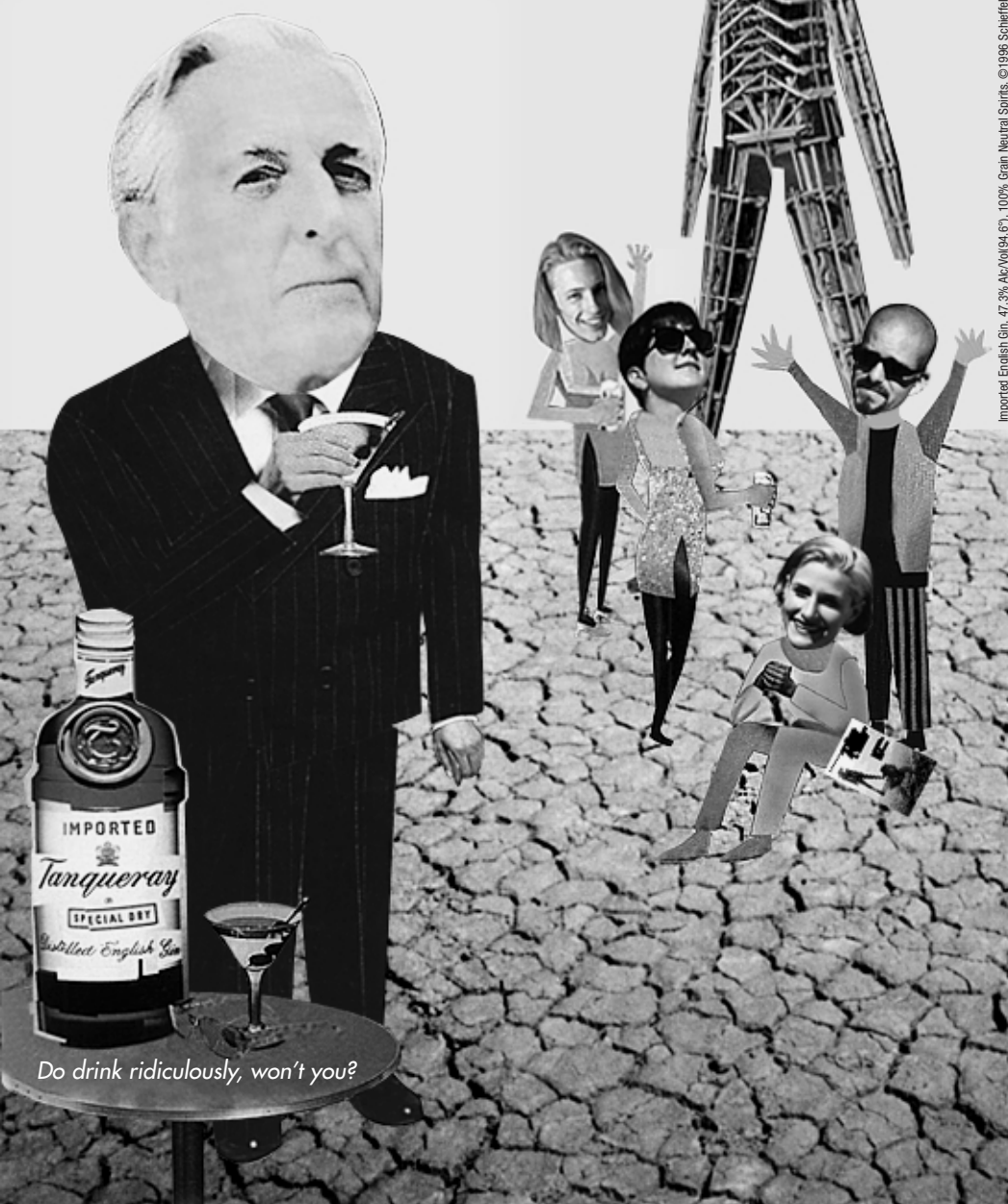
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